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ABSTRACT

This book discusses ways in which special-interest groups influence the content of textbooks used in public and private schools throughout the United States. The book focuses on recent federal lawsuits involving attempts to censor or ban reading, literature, science, and social studies textbooks. Recreating the story behind each lawsuit, the book describes how politically sophisticated national organizations turn local controversies into nationally publicized court cases. The book also discusses how groups from both the conservative and liberal ends of the political spectrum in Texas and California presure their State Boards of Education to demand that sections of textbooks be eliminated or rewritten as a condition of selling the books in those states. The book contends that, since California and Texas are such important markets, publishers almost always make the required changes in the books, which are then sold nationwide. As a result, according to the book, the content of American textbooks is heavily influenced by political and economic forces as well as by educational considerations. (NKA)

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